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**Martins Creek Elementary/Middle School's Bryson Cheek grimaces after getting a question wrong, but her team went on to win the SADD but TRU Quiz Bowl in February.**

school Battle of the Books, Quiz Bowl and the inaugural Superintendent's Cup.

Students in all grades participated in a field trip to the Tennessee Aquarium and Imax Theater in Chattanooga, Tenn.; the students raised \$2,086 for Jump Rope for Heart; classes and students earned honors in global online academic competitions involving 5.5 million students in 200 countries; and the school gained admittance to the Smoky Mountain Middle School Athletic Conference.

The Parent Teacher Organization and volunteers play an important role at Martins Creek, logging about 1,000 volunteer hours at the school. Parents always are welcome and are seen daily volunteering in classrooms. To participate in the volunteer program, please call the school at 837-2831.

Martins Creek School is the site of the largest public school solar mega array in the Southeast. The 1-megawatt array produces enough energy to prevent the burning of 75 tons of coal per day for electricity production.

Students will not have to worry about supplies for the 2012-13 year. The staff decided to continue to use school funds to purchase supplies needed for students to complete this next school year. The only items parents need to purchase for their children are a backpack and clean pair of shoes for physical education activities. There also are backpacks available if there is a need.

The school's goal is to continue to provide these supplies to students for as many years as possible. With the help of students and parents, the PTO raised \$1,400 through cookie dough sales and \$800 through collecting box tops. To help with this program, call Principal Paul Wilson at 837-2831. Donations can be sent to the school at 1459 Tobe Stalcup Road, Murphy, NC 28906.

## Mountain Youth

Mountain Youth School's 2011-12 year ended with Principal William

Gaither's words, "These kids get knocked down, but they never quit."

Actually, several students at Mountain Youth did stop attending school last year when their absences or grades got so out of hand that progressing to the next grade or graduating was impossible.

Where the resilience of these students and dedication of the Mountain Youth staff are evident is in the fact that some of these students are preparing to return to school this year, and the staff will be welcoming them back.

The 50-60 students who will come through Cherokee County Schools' alternative school in Martins Creek are a diverse group who share a common thread: each of them has thus been unsuccessful in a traditional school setting.

By committing to try and succeed in an alternative setting, these students gear up once again to be successful in an endeavor that has proved daunting in the past.

This willingness to try again is a huge task that Mountain Youth students address every day. Continually planning ways to motivate these students toward

success is the daily task of the dedicated and hard-working staff at this school.

To teach in an alternative school, teachers must accept that they will have a classroom of students who are resistant to school and the familiar feeling of failure that has been experienced in the past. These teachers must work hard every day to try and place students in a position to achieve success in the classroom while demanding work the students can be proud of when successful. These teachers teach, coach, cajole, lecture, sympathize, discipline and listen. Mostly, they work hard, they try to help students see their own strengths, and they care.

At Mountain Youth in 2012-13, several dozen students will work to earn course credits toward graduation when they are seniors. Some 20 or so will be receiving a diploma at the end of the school year.

The staff at Mountain Youth will see the results of their hard work and be proud. The parents and families of these students will celebrate, and Cherokee County will benefit as these graduates.

For details, call 837-6775.



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**Mountain Youth Students Jon Hardin and Carley Walls spoke to the Cherokee Scout about the effects of bullying in schools.**

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